

Message Text

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FOR OES/APT/SA

DEPT PASS NBS/GEORGE LINDAMOOD

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: TECH, EIND, JA, FR

SUBJECT: FRANCO-JAPANESE COOPERATION IN DEVELOPMENT OF COMPUTER TECHNOLOGY

REFS: TOKYO 9163, TOKYO 9166

1. ACCORDING TO A STORY WHICH APPEARED IN THE MAINICHI SHIMBUN OF JULY 23, THE GOVERNMENT OF FRANCE HAS PROPOSED THE FORMULATION OF A QUOTE FRANCO-JAPANESE ALLIANCE UNQUOTE FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF NEW COMPUTER TECHNOLOGY. THE STORY INDICATED THAT MINISTER BARRE OF THE FRENCH MINISTRY OF INTERNAL TRADE WILL MEET WITH MINISTER KOMOTO OF THE INTERNATIONAL TRADE AND INDUSTRY MINISTRY DURING BARRE'S VISIT IN TOKYO ON JULY 29. THE SOURCE FOR THE STORY WAS IDENTIFIED ONLY AS A QUOTE GOVERNMENT OFFICIAL UNQUOTE.

2. THE STORY WENT ON TO SAY THAT THE FRENCH GOVERNMENT WAS INTERESTED IN COLLABORATING ON THE DEVELOPMENT OF VLSI TECHNOLOGY. FRANCE IS BELIEVED TO BE WELL BEHIND THE U.S. AND JAPANESE COMPUTER MANUFACTURERS IN DEVELOPMENT OF VLSI AND RELATED TECHNOLOGIES. THE JAPANESE UNCLASSIFIED

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MANUFACTURERS HAVE INDICATED AN INTEREST IN FRENCH

ELECTRON BEAM TECHNOLOGY WHICH IS CONSIDERED TO BE VERY ADVANCED. THE FRENCH WOULD PRESUMABLY UEEATRADE THEIR ELECTRON BEAM TECHNOLOGY FOR INFORMATION ON VLSI PRODUCTION. MITI OFFICIALS HAVE REPORTEDLY SAID THAT THE MINISTRY, (WHICH IS FOOTING A MAJOOR PORTION OF THE VLSI R AND D BUDGET), WILL STUDY THE PROPOSAL TO SEE IF SUCH AN ALLIANCE WOULD BE OF MUTUAL BENEFIT.

COMMENT: IT IS HARD TO IMAGINE THAT A FRENCH PARTNER CAN BE ADDED TO A MARRIAGE OF JAPANESE COMPANIES WHICH WAS ORIGINALLY FORMED ONLY BY USE OF A FINANCIAL SHOTGUN. THE JAPANESE COMPANIES INVOLVED IN THE VLSI DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM HAVE FOUND IT DIFFICULT TO DEAL WITH EACH OTHER AND ONLY THE CONSTANT VIGILANCE OF MITI HAS KEPT THE RESEARCH TEAMS WORKING MORE OR LESS TOGETHER. THE FRENCH WOULD PROBABLY FIND IT EXTREMELY DIFFICULT TO JOIN SUCH A PARTNER-SHIP.
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